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For immediate release

Two Ouachita students named finalists in Kennedy Center theatre competition

By Katie Smith

March 26, 2018

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.



ARKADEPLHIA, Ark.—Two Ouachita Baptist University students were selected as finalists in auditions at the Region 6 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF). Students from Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, attended the festival, which was held recently in San Angelo, Texas.

Hannah Hill, a sophomore musical theatre major from Alexander, Ark., was selected as a finalist in the festival's Musical Theatre Initiative Singing/Acting Competition. Lauren Terry, a junior musical theatre major from Evansville, Ind., was named a finalist in the Musical Theatre Initiative Dance Performance competition.

Hill was nominated for her role in *The Secret Garden*, a production Ouachita's Department of Theatre Arts staged during the fall semester. She was nominated by a KCACTF respondent invited to watch the production. During the competition, Hill competed against 75 other students from the region.

"I feel like I have grown a lot since being here at Ouachita, and that's only because of the wonderful professors in the musical theatre program," Hill said. "This shows that Ouachita has an amazing musical theatre program with professors who truly care about their students and help them grow in their art. They push me to get better every day and encourage me along the way. It's also a blessing because I get to do what I love in a Christian environment."

Terry auditioned alongside other students during the competition and was recognized as a top-tier dancer along with 20 other students. She had the opportunity to rehearse and perform a routine at the festival's award ceremony.

"It was rather by accident that I got into theatre at all," Terry said. "As I started to learn, I realized how much I love dance. I knew when choosing a college, I wanted a place that had good dance opportunities for me."

"Their success is a testament to their talents and work ethic and also the training they're receiving," explained Drew Hampton, assistant professor of theatre arts. "There are some huge programs that attend

the festival, and to be competing alongside of them and holding our own, I think that serves as great validation of OBU's training in theatre, music and dance. It also bodes well for the success of our students and the School of Fine Arts."

Ten other Ouachita students also were selected to participate in the festival.

Students competing in the Irene Ryan Acting Competition included Scotty Scott, a senior musical theatre major from Bentonville, Ark. (assisted by Mackenzie Holtzclaw, a senior musical theatre major from North Little Rock, Ark.); Lauren Terry (assisted by Michael Peré, a senior musical theatre major from Roland, Ark.); Anna Valdez, a senior musical theatre major from Terrell, Texas (assisted by Kenzie Henderson, a junior musical theatre major from Rockwall, Texas); and Rachel Webber, a senior musical theatre major from Longview, Texas (assisted by Dylan Blackwood, a junior musical theatre major from Walnut Ridge, Ark.).

Scott and Will Stotts, a senior musical theatre major from Jonesboro, Ark., participated in the Musical Theatre Initiative Acting/Singing Competition.

Anna Darr, a senior musical theatre major from Alexander, Ark., as well as Terry and Valdez, participated in the Fringe Festival – Night of Invited Scenes.

Christina Johnson, visiting assistant professor of theatre arts, showcased three of her costumes in the festival's Costume Parade. Nadalie Gill, a theatre arts and mass communications major from Price, Texas, as well as Terry and Valdez, participated as models.

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